

## **Critical Access Behavioral Health Agency**

A Critical Access Behavioral Health Agency is a for profit, not for profit, public, or private behavioral health care company (formal business corporation or entity) that meets the following criteria:

### **Accreditation:**

Critical Access Behavioral Health Agencies will have a three year (or longer) accreditation from an accrediting body recognized by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (e.g., the Council on Accreditation [COA], the Commission on Accreditation and Rehabilitation Facilities [CARF], the Council on Quality and Leadership [CQL], and The Joint Commission, formerly known as the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations [TJC]).

### **Service Array:**

Each Critical Access Behavioral Health Agency is required to offer the following Core Services:

- Case Management for MH/SA not included in a bundled service(may only be provided by Critical Access Behavioral Health Provider agency)
- Comprehensive Clinical Assessment
- Medication management
- Outpatient therapy

and

Two additional services from the following list, which serve to create a continuum of care for the age/disability of the consumers to be served:

- Intensive In-Home (IIH)
- Community Support Team (CST)
- Substance Abuse Intensive Outpatient Program (SAIOP)
- Substance Abuse Comprehensive Outpatient Treatment (SACOT)
- Child Residential Level II, III, and IV
- Therapeutic Family Services (TFS)
- Day Treatment
- Psychosocial Rehabilitation (PSR)
- Assertive Community Treatment Team (ACTT)
- Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST)
- Mobile Crisis Team

### **Collaboration with Physical Health:**

Critical Access Behavioral Health Agencies will be expected to maintain close collaboration with primary care physicians, public Health Departments, Federally Qualified Health Clinics, and Community Care of NC, in order to ensure that the consumers being served are treated in a holistic manner that addresses both their behavioral health and physical health care needs.

**Minimally Required Staffing:**

Note: In appointing the Medical Director and Clinical Director, the provider agency must take into consideration not only professional certifications of the candidates but also the knowledge and experience that the individual(s) have with the populations to be served. Depending upon the size of the agency, the scope of services to be delivered, the size of the caseload to be served, and the experience of the incumbent, a board-certified or board-eligible psychiatrist may serve as both the Medical and Clinical Director. In that case, the positions must be filled by a single individual working full-time for the Critical Access Behavioral Health Agency.

**Medical Director**

A Critical Access Behavioral Health Agency shall have a Medical Director (licensed physician or psychiatrist). In total, the Critical Access Behavioral Health Agency must have one FTE, shared by no more than two individuals, of professional time from one or both of the above disciplines on-site in the agency. The training and experience of the Medical Director must be reflective of the population to be served. The loss of this position for more than 90 days will require a review of the agency's status as a Critical Access Behavioral Health Agency.

The Medical Director is responsible for:

- Overall supervision of all medical/clinical aspects of the services delivered;
- Identifying appropriate evidence-based or emerging best practices therapies to be employed by staff in delivering services;
- Oversight of all quality management initiatives;
- Ensuring the coordination between the MH/SA services being delivered with primary physical healthcare providers;
- Consulting with primary healthcare providers on the clinical aspects of the consumers being served and the implications for those consumers physical healthcare needs;
- Coordinating with medical staff of other providers, e.g. state and community inpatient facilities;
- Supervision of all other medical staff within the provider agency.

**Clinical Director**

A Critical Access Behavioral Health Agency shall have one FTE licensed clinical director, shared by no more than two individuals, on-site with education and experience sufficient to provide clinical direction to the staff employed by the provider agency. Individuals with provisional licenses may not serve as the agency Clinical Director. The Clinical Director must meet one of the following licensed discipline categories:

- Physician or Psychiatrist
- Licensed Clinical Social Worker
- Licensed Psychologist (Doctorate Level)
- Licensed Psychological Associate
- Licensed Professional Counselor
- Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist
- Mastered Degree Nurse – advanced practice only (NP, PNP, etc.)
- Licensed Clinical Addiction Specialist
- Certified Clinical Supervisor

The duties of the clinical director include:

- Supervision of all non-medical direct care staff in the provider agency;
- Design of the treatment protocols employed within the agency;
- Ensuring appropriate assessments for all consumers served;
- Implementation of best practice and emerging practice protocols;
- Reviews of service quality;
- Design of all staff training.

Quality Improvement/Training Director:

A Critical Access Behavioral Health Agency shall have one FTE Quality Improvement/Training Director (required to provide evidence of quality improvement activities as required in the standard agreement/contract). This position requires a Bachelors Degree and three years experience or a Masters Degree and one year of experience utilizing data to support the development of quality services.

The duties of the QI/Training Director include:

- Development of a quality improvement/quality assurance plan;
- Ensure compliance with all documentation, staff qualification and all other state and federal requirements for the services being delivered;
- Oversight of staff credentialing process;
- Staff support for the quality improvement committee;
- Developing and reporting consumer outcomes and comparing the agency's performance to outcomes achieved by other, similar providers.
- Development and implementation of a protocol for continuous staff training designed to achieve all requirements of the services being delivered.

**Funding Sources:**

A Critical Access Behavioral Health Agency shall serve consumers who are eligible for Medicaid as well as indigent consumers supported by State funds. In serving consumers funded with state funds, referrals must be for services provided by the provider, the regulations governing the use of funds must be materially similar to Medicaid regulations, and the rates paid for services must be no less than the Medicaid rates. Critical Access Behavioral Health Agencies must seek to become eligible to be paid for services by all third party payors that reimburse for services that the agency delivers (e.g. private insurance, Medicare, TriCare, etc.).